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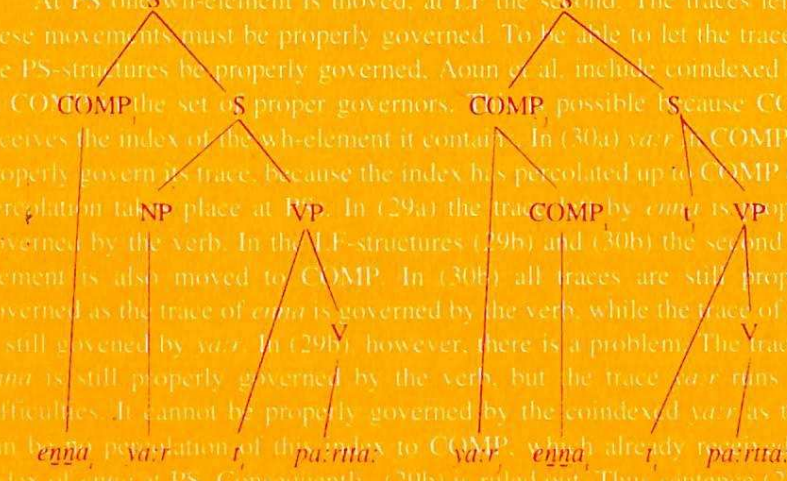
These sentences exhibit subject/object asymmetry. Aoun, Hornstein & Sportiche (1981) give an account of the so-called Superiority Condition based on the Empty Category Principle (ECP) which states that an empty category has to be properly governed. In a configurational language those wh-elements that do not move to COMP at PS, have to move to COMP at LF. Thus the structure of (27) and (28) at PS and at LF are as in (29a-b) and (30a-b):

(29a) PS (29b) LF



At PS one wh-element is moved, at LF the second. The traces left by these movements must be properly governed. To be able to let the traces in the PS-structures be properly governed, Aoun et al. include coindexed NPs in COMP in the set of proper governors. COMP becomes possible because COMP receives the index of the wh-element it contains. In (30a) *va:r* in COMP can properly govern its trace, because the index has percolated up to COMP (this percolation takes place at IVP. In (29a) the trace left by *enna* is properly governed by the verb. In the LF-structures (29b) and (30b) the second wh-element is also moved to COMP. In (30b) all traces are still properly governed as the trace of *enna* is governed by the verb, while the trace of *va:r* is still governed by *va:r*. In (29b), however, there is a problem. The trace of *enna* is still properly governed by the verb, but the trace *va:r* runs into difficulties. It cannot be properly governed by the coindexed *va:r* as there can be no percolation of this index to COMP, which already received the index of *enna* at PS. Consequently, (29b) is ruled out. Thus sentence (27) is ungrammatical while (28)is correct. The configurational approach correctly deals with the superiority facts (Subhadra Ramachandran, PJDS 1995/5:2).

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COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF 'EATING' IN TAMIL

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0. Introduction

It is proposed here to analyse the semantic domain of eating* in Tamil. The verbs such as *uṇṇu* 'eat', *ca:ppiṭu* 'eat', *aruntu* 'eat', *tiṉṉu* 'eat', *koṛi 'eat little by little', viḻuṅku* 'swallow', *kuṭi* 'drink', *paruku*, 'drink' *uṛiñcu* 'suck', *cu:ppu* 'suck', *kaṭi* 'bite', *ɕavai* 'chew' *mel* 'chew' *kutappu* 'roll food inside mouth', *acaipo:ṭu* 'chew' and *nakku* 'lick' refer to different processes of eating in Tamil. There are two sets of verbs in this group, one set denoting the actual process of eating which involves taking food into the stomach and another set denoting the peripheral processes of eating which involve impact on food in the mouth such as sucking, biting, chewing, etc. The stylistic differences of preferring one item over the other is not given here. There is fluidity in the tendency of preference. The componential analysis of meaning explained by Nida (1975) is taken as a framework to serve our purpose.

Componential analysis views the meaning of a word in a language as composed of some semantic components. The meanings of words which share some semantic components can be grouped into certain semantic domains. Languages are independent of one another in exploiting certain semantic components and discarding some others. Dictionaries use definitional approach of defining meanings of lexical items in terms of other lexical items. They employ alphabetical arrangements of words and they may provide a list of antonyms and synonyms at the end of an entry. But in a conventional dictionary minute semantic distinctions may not be easily found. A thesaurus deals with meaning like a dictionary but differs from it in arrangement and function. A conventional thesaurus lists various lexical items under different semantic domains or groups. In this respect, it makes use of componential features. But it does not explain or illustrate the minute differences in the related meanings of words and the user will be compelled to refer to a dictionary. A thesaurus incorporating the componential analysis of meanings will be the most useful tool for a language learner as well as for a translator. In this a number of related lexical items will be grouped under hierarchically arranged semantic domains and the distinguishing componential features between each item which fall under a domain will be identified. English is equiped with Roget's thesaurus in its various editions. We have *nikaṇṭus* for Tamil. A thesaurus for modern Tamil based on structural semantics has been prepared by the present author which is in manuscript

* 'Eating' which involves human being is taken care of here. The entire group of animals may include a few more verbs.

form. A thesaurus based on componential analysis of meaning will be a comprehensive work. Such work is very essential for effective writing in the same language as well as for translation into another language. A bilingual thesaurus on componential analysis can be a welcome tool for a translator.

1. Components of Referential Meaning

The two intersecting sets of factors which may conveniently classify meanings are: cognitive vs emotive and extralinguistic vs intra-linguistic.

Cognitive	Emotive
Extralinguistic referential	emotive to extralinguistic factors
Intralinguistic grammatical	emotive response to intralinguistic factors

"Referential meaning is based on the relation between the lexical unit and the referent. The referent itself may be called the denotatum but this denotatum is not the meaning. Not even the total list of all the denotata (which may be called technically the designatum) constitutes the meaning. The meaning consists of that particular structured bundle of cognitive features, associated with the lexical units, which make possible the designation of all the denotata by the lexical unit in question. In other words, the meaning consists of that set of necessary and sufficient conceptual features which make it possible for the speaker to separate the referential potentiality of any one lexical unit from that of any other unit which tend to occupy part of the same semantic domain" (Nida 1975: 25–26). It is conceived that a word has or possesses a particular meaning, but in reality a word is only a behavioural event and in a strict sense cannot be said to possess anything. Meaning must be related to the conceptions which the participants in a communicative event have or come to share and which they associate with a particular lexical unit. Language is not simply a system of symbols and arrangements of symbols. It has the capacity to define its own meaning by employing paraphrases which can more explicitly designate.

The fundamental differences in the bases for cognitive and emotive meanings are to be recognized. The cognitive meanings are based upon conceptual features of the lexical units or combinations of such units in grammatical construction. The emotive meanings are based upon people's reactions either to entities and events of the extralinguistic world as symbolized by language or to the degree of appropriateness or inappropriateness in the use of linguistic forms. The linguistic meaning of any form must be determined by contrast as there is no meaning apart from significant differences. There would be no blueness if there is nothing to contrast with blue. The same is true for the meanings of words. Words have meaning because of their systematic contrasts with other words which share certain features with them but contrast with them by other features. To determine the componential features of the central meaning of *ca:ppiṭu* 'eat' this central meaning of *ca:ppiṭu* has to be contrasted with related meanings of other forms as they share certain aspects of meaning as eating terms.

The componential analysis employs four types of linguistic procedures: naming, paraphrasing, defining and classifying. The process of naming is similar to reference in certain respects though the perspective is somewhat different. The relation established between a linguistic unit and a referent is usually described as reference while the specific act of designating such a referent is naming. Spelling out the distinctive features of any semantic unit by employing certain types of praphrases (for example *uṟiñcu* as 'draw into the mouth by action of the lips and tongue, thereby producing a partial vacuum) is paraphrasing. Any systematic approach to paraphrasing soon reveals two different types of semantic units: 1) core units and 2) those expressions which incorporate core units into paraphrases. For example, the central meanings of *ca:ppiṭu* 'eat' constitute such core units, for we may describe the related meanings of *tiṉṉu* 'eat', *koṛi* 'eat scantly' and *viḻuṅku* 'swallow' as various aspects of *ca:ppiṭu* 'eat'. Though the process of defining seems to be another form of paraphrase, in its real sense defining is a highly specialized form of paraphrase and is rarely used in actual language situations. It is essentially combining all the various specific paraphrases into a single statement based on the diagnostic components of the particular meaning in question. For example, a definition of *koṛi* is not simply a list of all the possible paraphrases, that is to say, list of all the referents (technically called the denotata), but rather a statement of those necessary and sufficient features which make it possible for the speaker of a language to designate properly the referents in question. The meaning of *koṛi* as part of the domain of eating terms may be defined 'eat little by little or bit by bit by using teeth'.

The classification involves a tripple procedure of grouping together those units which have certain features in common, separating out those units which are distinct from one another, and determining the basis for such groupings. The processes of putting referents into conceptual piles is not classification, though such a process is often an important preliminary step in the procedure. It is important to determine the basis for such conceptual piles and the relations of such piles to each other. For example, for the eating terms, it is essential to establish the features of the manner in which the food is taken which includes using of organs of eating such as lips, teeth and tongue and the nature of the food as the object of the action of eating.

2. Procedural Steps in the Analysis of Diagnostic Components.

Procedural steps have to be followed for the analysis of the components of a related set of meanings. The first step involves a tentative selection of meanings which appear to be closely related as they constitute a relatively well-defined semantic domain by virtue of sharing a number of common components. In this case, the meanings of *uṇṇu*, *ca:ppiṭu*, *aruntu*, *tiṉṉu*, *koṛi*, *viḻuṅku*, *kuṭi*, *paruku*, *uriñcu*, *cu:ppu*, *cappu*, *kaṭi*, *cavai*, *mel*, *kutappu*, *acaipo:ṭu* and *nakku* all share the components of the action of eating in which the impact on food in the mouth is the diagnostic feature. "In general it is best to begin with a relatively small domain and gradually enlarge it as the meanings of other terms appear to be related through some of the diagnostic components. Such a procedure works more satisfactorily than

starting with a large assortment of meanings which may represent several different domains" (Nida 1975: 55).

The second step involves an examination of all the possible referents of the meanings belonging to the domain in question. *tiṉṉu*, for example, may include various shades of eating, but all these different shades of eating are subsumed under the designation of *tiṉṉu*. On the otherhand *tiṉṉu* can also be used to denote the gnawing of termite which can be most efficiently analysed as secondary semantic development. "The second step is essential if one is to eliminate a number of extraneous features which unduly complicate the basic analysis, but figurative senses are not eliminated from ultimate consideration. Rather, they should be treated at that point where the distinctive features can be handled systematically" (Nida 1975: 58–59).

The third step involves the analysis of the various meanings as seen in the nature of the referents to determine the characteristics relevant to one or more meanings, but not relevant to all. In other words to determine the diagnostic features which separate the meanings from one another, one must analyse the different, but related meanings. In this series one of the most obvious difference appears to be 'taking into the stomach' referred by the forms *uṉṉu*, *ca:ppiṭu*, *aruntu*, *tiṉṉu*, *koṛi*, *viḻuṅku*, *kuṭi* and *paruku* in contrast with *uṛiñcu*, *cappu*, *cu:ppu*, *kaṭi*, *cavai*, *mel*, *kutappu*, *acaipo:ṭu* and *nakku* in which taking into the stomach is not the diagnostic feature. Another distinction is on the nature of the food whether it is solid or liquid. The meanings of *kuṭi*, *paruku* and *uṛiñcu* are distinguished from the meanings of other verbs by implying the feature '-solid object' (i.e. '+liquid object). *koṛi* contrasts with *tiṉṉu* implying the additional feature that the object of eating is taken in small quantities or bit by bit by the process of biting. *tiṉṉu*, *koṛi*, *kaṭi*, *cavai*, *mel* and *acaipo:ṭu* are different from *viḻuṅku*, *kuṭi*, *paruku*, *uṛiñcu*, *cu:ppu*, *cappu* and *nakku* by implying chewing by teeth. *viḻuṅku* implies an additional feature of quick passing of the food through the mouth. Though *uṛiñcu*, *kuṭi* and *paruku* imply taking in liquid food, *uṛiñcu* does not imply taking into stomach. The meanings of *viḻuṅku*, *kaṭi* and *nakku* are different from the meanings of other verbs as they denote momentary action in contrast with durative action.

The important testing of certain contrasts can be done in the third step. One may say, for example, *avaṉ taṇṇi:raik kuṭikkavillai*, *uṛiñciṇa:ṉ* 'he did not drink the water, but only sucked it'. Such a negative-positive frame is first a test to determine whether the meanings of *kuṭi* and *uṛiñcu* are in contrast, and secondly it serves as a means of highlighting what may be the significant differences in the two events. This negative-positive contrast may, of course, take various forms, e.g. *uṛiñca:te: kuṭi* 'don't suck, drink'. There are some situations in which a causal frame is useful. In distinguishing between *tiṉṉu* and *kuṭi* one might say *avaṉa:l ataik kuṭikka muṭiyum e:ṉeṉṟa:l atu tiravapporuḷ* 'he can drink it, because it is liquid'. One may also combine causal and positive-negative frames as *avaṉa:l ataik kuṭikka muṭiyum, e:ṉeṉṟa:l atu tiṭa ru:pattil illai* 'it can be drunk, because it is not in solid state'.

The fourth step involves the listing of the distinctive features of each of the meanings. For the meanings of eating terms we can list the components as follows:

1. *uṉṉu* taking food into the stomach
2. *ca:ppiṭu* taking food into the stomach
3. *aruntu* taking food into the stomach
4. *tiṉṉu* taking into the stomach solid food after mastigating with teeth
5. *koṛi* taking into the stomach solid food little by little or bit by bit by biting with teeth
6. *viḻuṅku* taking into stomach solid food by passing through the mouth quickly
7. *kuṭi* taking into stomach liquid food
8. *paruku* taking into stomach liquid food
9. *uṛiñcu* taking into the mouth liquid food by using lips and tongue there by producing a vacuum
10. *cu:ppu* taking in solid food by using lips and tongue
11. *cappu* taking in solid food by using lips and tongue
12. *kaṭi* bite momentarily solid food with teeth
13. *cavai* bite continuously solid food with teeth
14. *mel* bite continuously solid food with teeth
15. *kutappu* roll about in the mouth solid food with tongue
16. *acaipo:ṭu* bite continously solid food with teeth
17. *nakku* touch food with tongue

The fifth step involves naming various possible referents and relating the statements of components to features of the referents to test the analysis. Take for example, that one eats a semisolid food by using teeth and another eats a semisolid food without using teeth. According to the sets of componential features, the former could be designated as *tiṉṉu* and the latter as *kuṭi*. But a systematic analysis of the results of the fourth setp reveals certain inconsistencies. "Componential analysis does not attempt to describe in details all the various features or characteristics of each type of related event, but only to point out distinctive contrasts which serve to separate one meaning or set of meanings from the other. "Meaning must be regarded as serving primarily a negative role in setting boundaries to semantic territories, rather than as specifying all the variations of events which may occur within the area of a single lexical unit" (Nida 1975: 60–61).

The sixth step consists of showing the significant sets of contrast by setting up an economical system. This can be done conveniently by a matrix, as given in the table (see page 180).

3. Conclusion

Componential analysis of 'eating' in Tamil depends on two extralinguistic features (1) the manner in which the food is taken in and (2) the nature of the food. The manner includes the components such as (1) impact on food in the mouth, (2) taking into the stomach, (3) durative vs momentary, (4) passing through the mouth quickly, (5) take little by little or bit by bit, (6) roll about in the mouth, (7) use of teeth, (8) use of lips and (9) use of tongue. The nature of food implies whether the food is solid or liquid. The entire vocabulary of Tamil can be structured by manipulating the componential analysis of meaning (Rajendran 1991). In the words

of Nida (1975: 207) "semantic components are extremely important in (1) the description of language behaviour and predictions concerning it, (2) The detailed comparison of meanings, whether intralingually (i.e. within a single language) or extralingually (i.e. between languages, thus providing a more adequate basis for translational equivalences), (3) the judging of semantic compatibility, as an important feature of style, and (4) treating figurative extensions of meaning". This study can be shown to be more purposeful and useful, by relating it to lexicography. The result can be shown how well one can write or improve the definitions in monolingual dictionaries of Tamil currently available.

Acknowledgement

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	unṇu	ca:ppiṭu	aruntu	tiṉṉu	kori	viḻuṅku	kuṭi	paruku	uṟiñcu	cu:ppu	cappu	kaṭi	cavai	mel	kutappu	acaipo:ṭu	nakku
1. Impact on food in the mouth	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2. Taking into the stomach	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3. Durative (vs. momentary)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-
4. Passing through the mouth quickly	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0
5. Take little by little or bit by bit	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Roll about in the mouth	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
7. Use of teeth	0	0	0	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	0	+	-
8. Use of lips	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
9. Use of tongue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	-	-	-	+	0	+
10. Solid food (vs.liquid)	0	0	0	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0